

Auditor to probe Frederica finances

By Drew Volturo
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FREDERICA — The state auditor's office will review the beleaguered and — according to its mayor — broke town of Frederica to help get its finances in order.

Mayor William "Chick" Glanden said Wednesday that the audit will "show me where the money went."

"I know where it went — to pay the police," he said.

Frederica's general fund, which had more than \$100,000 last year according to town figures, has dwindled to \$3,000.

Mayor Glanden said the lack of funds led him to propose last week that the town lay off Police Chief Charles "Chuck" Manuszak, one half of the town's force.

The proposal was derailed at a public hearing June 9 when 80 residents turned out to protest the layoff. Several demanded to see the bookkeeping and were not satisfied with the mayor's documentation on a legal pad.

Mayor Glanden said the state audit should satisfy residents and council members.

"I will have seven years' worth of stuff laid out for (the auditors)," Mayor Glanden said. "I've been in office three months. There's no way I broke this town in three months."

He added that he does not intend to reintroduce his proposal to lay off Chief Manuszak, leaving any action up to council.

In the interim, the town will have to dip into its municipal

street aid funds to pay for the two police officers, he said.

"The decision is up to (council)," Mayor Glanden said. "They know my feelings."

"If they want to spend every cent we have in municipal street aid on these cops, then when we get snowed in, I expect council to dig everyone out."

Nicholas Adams, executive assistant to the state auditor, said that the office would start looking at town accounts in 10-14 days.

"We got a request from Sen. (Colin R.J.) Bonini last week to take a look at the town's general finances," Mr. Adams said.

Sen. Bonini, R-Dover, represents the tiny hamlet of 700.

"I've had some concerns about Frederica for a long time

and some constituents called me with the same concerns about where the money is going," he said.

"We need to have financial controls in place that we do not have now."

Sen. Bonini said Frederica has a bid for a charter change that would allow it to annex land pending in the General Assembly.

He said he would not support passage of the charter change until the audit is finished. Under state law, municipal charter changes must be approved by the legislature.

Staff writer Joe Rogalsky contributed to this article.

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